



## **EU e-communications industry calls for harmonised and effective data protection for the benefit of innovation and consumers**

**Brussels, 14 May 2013 – The new EU data protection rules should be effective and clear but also flexible enough to allow companies to innovate and consumers to benefit from new services, underlined ETNO, ECTA, GSMA and Cable Europe today on the occasion of a joint industry event hosted by MEP Seán Kelly, and with the participation of European Commission Vice-President Viviane Reding.**

MEP Seán Kelly said: *"The General Data Protection Regulation must offer a level playing field for all sectors, both in the online and offline world. As lawmakers, we must work to ensure that the provisions of e-privacy and GDPR do not conflict each other and that a principle of technology and service neutrality is implemented effectively"*.

Viviane Reding, Vice President of the European Commission for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, said: *"In a world where the exchange of personal data is part of our everyday life and is the bread and butter of companies, we have to think about how to strike the right balance between protecting citizens' privacy and making it easy for companies to innovate and do business. The Commission answered these questions with the proposed EU Data Protection Regulation. The message is clear: reliable, consistently applied rules make data processing safer, cheaper and inspire users' confidence. Confidence in turn drives growth. I am convinced that data protection is the business model of tomorrow."*

It is essential that the new EU Data Protection Regulation strikes the right balance between data protection and creating economic and social opportunities and benefits from technology and data according to key trade associations representing Europe's e-communications industry.

Europe's e-communications industry is well-positioned to meet demands for new ever-innovative services based on a responsible use of data for the benefit of business and consumers alike. The future EU legal framework should allow responsible companies to unlock the potential of personal data to drive new digital services that consumers are demanding, and in turn generate growth and jobs throughout the EU.

Seeking to put an end to the fragmentation of data protection regimes throughout the 27 EU member states, the Regulation has the potential to accelerate the digital

single market for telecoms services thereby improving the online experience for European citizens. By offering a consistent data protection level to consumers throughout the EU and beyond, the new Regulation will also reinforce consumer trust and confidence while ensuring that consumers benefit from a clear and strong protection of their personal data.

Consumer confidence will be substantially reinforced by ensuring that EU citizens' personal data shall be granted the same level of protection, regardless of the geographical location or the economic sector of the service provider ("same services, same rules").

As certainty for businesses is vital in today's economic environment, it is also essential to address the inconsistencies between the new Regulation and the ePrivacy Directive, avoiding the introduction of a dual regime for the e-communications industry.

The contributors to this joint statement are:

	<p><b>Cable Europe</b> (<a href="http://www.cable-europe.eu">www.cable-europe.eu</a>), the European Cable Communications Association, is based in Brussels and groups all the leading European cable TV operators and their national trade associations throughout Europe. The aim of Cable Europe is to promote and defend the industry's policies and business interests at European and international level. The European cable TV industry provides digital TV, broadband Internet and telephony services to more than 73 million customers. Contact: Gregg Svingen, Communications Director, <a href="mailto:gregg.svingen@cable-europe.eu">gregg.svingen@cable-europe.eu</a> +32 476 490 603</p>
	<p><b>ECTA</b> (European Competitive Telecommunications Association - <a href="http://www.ectaportal.com">www.ectaportal.com</a>) is the pan-European pro-competitive trade association for European Telecoms companies and represents over 150 communications companies. Contact: Federico Poggi, Senior Manager, Public Affairs, +32 2 290 0103</p>
	<p><b>ETNO</b> (the European Telecommunications Network Operators' Association - <a href="http://www.etno.eu">www.etno.eu</a>) is the voice of the European telecommunications network operators with over a decade of experience in shaping EU telecoms policy. The association represents 41 companies located in 35 European countries. They account for an aggregate annual turnover of more than 250 billion Euros and employ over one million people across Europe. Contact: Caroline Greer, Regulatory &amp; Public Affairs Manager, + 32 2 2271083</p>
	<p>The <b>GSMA</b> represents the interests of mobile operators worldwide. Spanning more than 220 countries, the GSMA unites nearly 800 of the world's mobile operators with more than 230 companies in the broader mobile ecosystem, including handset makers, software companies, equipment providers and Internet companies, as well as organisations in industry sectors such as financial services, healthcare, media, transport and utilities. The GSMA also produces industry-leading events such as the Mobile World Congress and Mobile Asia Expo. For more information, please visit the GSMA corporate website at <a href="http://www.gsma.com">www.gsma.com</a> or Mobile World Live, the online portal for the mobile communications industry, at <a href="http://www.mobileworldlive.com">www.mobileworldlive.com</a>.</p> <p>Contact: Martin Whitehead, Director, GSMA Europe (+32 2 792 05 56 / <a href="mailto:MWhitehead@gsma.com">MWhitehead@gsma.com</a>). For press enquiries: William Parker-Jenkins, Weber Shandwick (+32 (0) 2 894 90 28 / <a href="mailto:williamparker@webershandwick.com">williamparker@webershandwick.com</a>)</p>